

Celebrating Solutions Award Nomination Form

Legal name of organization: La Casa de las Madres

Year established: 1976

Program nominated for award (if different): Safe Housing Project

Year established: 2005

Address: 1423 Mission St, Suite 225

City/State/ZIP code: San Francisco, CA 94103

Contact person: Claire McCullough

Title: Safe Housing Project Coordinator

Phone number: 415-503-0500 x 312

Fax number: 415-503-0301

E-mail address: claire@lacasa.org

Website address: www.lacasa.org

Brief description of organization: La Casa provides comprehensive services to victims of domestic violence, 24 hours/day, 365 days/year.

Geographical area served: San Francisco, CA

Is the organization tax-exempt under IRS 501 (c) (3) guidelines or a public agency/unit of government? Yes


Please check up to five descriptors that best apply to the program you are nominating:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shelter-based | <input type="checkbox"/> Prison-based |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Counseling | <input type="checkbox"/> Stalking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health care setting | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coalition/collaboration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dating violence | <input type="checkbox"/> Transitional housing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School/youth violence | <input type="checkbox"/> Technology/Internet service |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Underserved population | <input type="checkbox"/> Employment/training program |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Faith-based | <input type="checkbox"/> Victim relocation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Elder abuse | <input type="checkbox"/> Hotline service |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Legal aid/assistance | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public awareness/education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> University setting | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other permanent low income housing support |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Batterer treatment | |

As one of the goals of the Mary Byron Foundation is to disseminate information about cutting-edge programs and best practices, we wish to post exemplary Celebrating Solutions Award nominations on our website (www.marybyronfoundation.org). Those posted will include the organization's website address, telephone number, and e-mail address. If you have concerns about this request, please address them to information@marybyronfoundation.org

prior to submitting a nomination.

By my signature on this letter, I grant the Mary Byron Foundation permission to use the contents of my nomination for the Celebrating Solutions Award in the manner and for the purposes set above. I further affirm that I am fully authorized to grant such permission to the Mary Byron Foundation.



1. Describe the mission of your organization in five sentences or less.

The mission of La Casa de las Madres is to respond to calls for help from domestic violence victims, of all ages, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. We give survivors the tools to transform their lives. We seek to prevent future violence by educating the community and by redefining public perceptions about domestic violence. Our service continuum offers emergency residential shelter and community-based services to women, teens and their children while providing advocacy, counseling, family-based services and referrals. Located in the heart of San Francisco, our Drop-In Center houses two 24 hour crisis phone lines, Counseling Center, Teen Program, Legal Services Coordinator and Community Education and Outreach Program, and at other locations around the city we run the Emergency Shelter, Domestic Violence Response Team, Safe Havens Project, Mary Elizabeth Inn Case Management Program, and Safe Housing Project.

2. Describe the most innovative aspects of the program you are submitting for consideration.

La Casa's Safe Housing Project works to empower residents of San Francisco's permanent supportive housing sites to create communities that foster and demand violence free lives and help resident domestic violence victims maintain their housing stability. The program brings La Casa's expertise onsite to low income living environments across the city to inspire, educate and organize successful domestic violence intervention and prevention efforts.

Historically, domestic violence programs have waited for victims to seek out assistance. When the relationship abuse has reached a state of crisis, pain, and turmoil that is insurmountable, victims call or drop in for assistance. The Safe Housing Project is progressive in its ability to go into the communities where low income families live and provide outreach, education, and support to victims of abuse throughout all stages of the cycle of violence, even before a relationship has begun. The Project Coordinator runs weekly and bi monthly women's groups at housing sites throughout the city, creating a truly *community-based* support group for women. At many sites drop-in women's workshops are held, which provide psycho educational support for residents on a monthly or quarterly basis. Both the groups and workshops focus on a variety of issues affecting women, from the cycle of violence and power and control tactics, to depression, child development, and self-care. Many residents also choose to meet individually with the Project Coordinator to discuss relationship concerns. Through this type of outreach, victims who are not allowed to leave the housing site because of a controlling partner might be allowed to attend a women's workshop, dinner or group within their own community (or can more easily attend an event while the batterer is not on-site because attendance does not entail exiting the building).

Through direct and on-site work with residents, the Project Coordinator builds a presence at each housing site. Beyond women's groups, workshops, and individual counseling, the Coordinator participates in community events such as food pantry, holiday celebrations, community meetings, children and youth activities, and coffee hours. In this way she becomes a familiar face, allowing residents to feel more comfortable approaching her with relationship concerns and fears. Even residents who

are not in abusive relationships become familiar with the Coordinator and refer family or friends when assistance is needed.

Additionally, the Project Coordinator meets on a regular basis with Tenant Services and Property Management personnel. Community outreach is tailored specifically to the needs of each individual housing site, and the housing site staff and Project Coordinator work together to plan, implement, and support victims of domestic violence. All Tenant Services staff at each active housing site participate in a Domestic Violence 101 Training, where they receive information, resources, consultation, and practice on working with victims of domestic violence. Following this training, they continually contact the Project Coordinator for specific client case consultations. The staff and coordinator often collaborate to review policies and procedures, editing and submitting to management suggested changes focused on helping the site more specifically follow the spirit of the federal Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), as well as support and empower victims. Specifically, La Casa partners with the National Housing Law Project to provide training to property management companies on the legal requirements of VAWA, the nature of domestic violence, and the importance of supporting victims of domestic violence by assisting in housing retention.

The Project Coordinator also holds a monthly Domestic Violence Case Consultation at La Casa's Drop-In Center. Attended by housing site staff from around the city, this consultation is an opportunity for staff to share their experiences with victims of domestic violence, brainstorm best practice strategies, share resources, and debrief. The Project Coordinator also presents new information at each consultation, from information and statistics on Teen Dating Violence, to Legal Resources in the Bay Area. In this way housing site staff are able to continually learn about different issues and resources related to victims of domestic violence, as well as consult with other staff experiencing similar issues and challenges.

Beyond direct support to victims and housing site staff, the Project Coordinator works as an advocate for the rights of victims of domestic violence. From individual client housing rights to San Francisco Housing Authority (SFHA) policy changes, the Safe Housing Project is a dedicated and pronounced voice in housing right advocacy for victims of domestic violence in San Francisco. Recently, the Safe Housing Project was involved in the SFHA Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy changes, specifically playing a key role in maintaining domestic violence as a lawful and recognized allowance for *Priority* Transfer within SFHA property. Advocacy such as this is an integral part of the Safe Housing Project.

3. Describe your program's implementation. What barriers did your organization have to overcome? How did you marshal the necessary resources for implementation?

La Casa originated over thirty-two years ago as California's first domestic violence shelter. Over the years, we have expanded to include over 10 different programs. Prior to the official implementation of the Safe Housing Project, La Casa staff worked with individual housing sites around the city on an as needed basis. For example, a weekly women's group was held at one housing site, and at another site staff received intensive domestic violence training. While some housing sites solicited and received

support from La Casa, others were not able or willing to bring in outside assistance for victims. In 2003, the San Francisco Family Supportive Housing Network (SFFSHN), a collaboration of 15 supportive housing sites, underwent a strategic process to explore general needs and weaknesses within housing site providers. As part of this strategic process, the SFFSHN identified domestic violence as something they needed assistance in addressing. Based on this community-articulated need, La Casa was asked to explore the possibility of providing structured and consistent support to all supportive housing sites in San Francisco. In developing the Safe Housing Project, La Casa and the SFFSHN focused on how to provide efficient and consistent care to all residents by bringing La Casa expertise on site, rather than each housing site creating their own policy and methods regarding victims of domestic violence. Thus was born the founding model for the Safe Housing Project, focusing on both housing site staff and resident outreach, education, and empowerment.

The largest barrier in the initial implementation of the Safe Housing Project was getting housing sites to invest in partnership. While all services provided by La Casa to site staff and residents were free, we were not able to provide additional funds to housing sites for being a partner. Some sites initially denied partnership because the nature of domestic violence makes it often easier to ignore than to address. Other sites were in the habit of either denying that domestic violence was a problem for their tenants, or felt more comfortable leaving the issue unaddressed. It took repeated and unyielding efforts to schedule many sites for even an initial informational interview and agency presentation. With time and persistence, many of the housing sites opened their doors to the Safe Housing Project. Over the last year, the Safe Housing Project worked with staff or residents across many of San Francisco's low income housing sites. We continue to knock on doors and break down barriers at sites all over the city.

Initially La Casa funded the Safe Housing Project through a one-time grant from the Corporation for Supportive Housing and the organization's general funding stream. With nearly 50% of La Casa's revenue generated through private funding, we retain the flexibility to create and support new and progressive programs. La Casa's Board of Directors adopted the Safe Housing Project into the general continuum of services, and it is included in all requests for general and ongoing funding. Throughout the years, La Casa has applied for and received some partial funding for the Project, however continues to sustain the funding basis in house.

4. How do you know your program works? Please site two examples.

The Safe Housing Project tracks it's effectiveness in multiple ways. At each Domestic Violence 101 Training, evaluations are handed out to attending staff. Evaluations focus on whether or not the training increased knowledge about domestic violence, resources, and comfort with addressing the issue. The evaluations overwhelmingly state that trainings are a successful tool in increasing awareness and sensitivity. Here are a few staff evaluation comments:

- "I had no idea that such complete and comprehensive service was available to victims."

- "The information that was most useful was how to support victims effectively and safely. I learned that I didn't know as much as I thought about domestic violence, and that what would appear to be natural responses to victims are not the best and most effective ways to support and help them."
- "I thought the training about types of abuse – power and control as well as the discussion around these issues was really good. It really made me think about these issues."

In addition to evaluations from housing site staff, the Project Coordinator tracks the success of the program by its ability to assist individual clients in reaching their own goals and create safe and positive changes for themselves and their children. One example of this is a woman named Leona. Leona lived in a San Francisco Project Based Section 8 housing site with her 5 children. She moved there after separating with her husband who had been both emotionally and physically abusive. At her housing site, she began attending the Safe Housing Project's weekly women's group with members of her own community. She also worked individually with the Project Coordinator, who connected her with free family and individual counseling at La Casa's Drop-in Center. The Project Coordinator partnered with a local restraining order clinic to assist Leona in obtaining a restraining order. When the batterer located Leona and began making threats, she asked the Project Coordinator for assistance in staying safe. Leona's housing site denied her transfer request and she was in fear for her own life and the lives of her children. The Project Coordinator found a lawyer from a local legal assistance organization to represent the client and her right to safety, and the client was eventually allowed to move to a different housing site outside of San Francisco without losing her federal housing subsidy. Other clients like Leona have also gained more direct access to community services, legal assistance and safe housing through project engagement.

5. Who are your key partners? What are their roles?

The Safe Housing Project works in partnership with the SFFSHN, meeting monthly as a group and individually as needed. As a member of the SFFSHN, La Casa provides consistent consultation and direct client service to each of the 15 housing site members, as well as advises the collaboration as a whole on policy and programming specifications that empower victims of domestic violence and adhere to federal, state, and local guidelines. The Safe Housing Project also partners with with housing sites around the city to provide direct and support services. Over the last year, client outreach and/or staff training was provided by the Project Coordinator to over 50 different San Francisco housing sites.

At each housing site, the Safe Housing Project provides domestic violence knowledge and expertise, community resources and referrals, domestic violence service provider networking, individual counseling, group facilitation, staff consultation, and advocacy. The partnering housing site provides space for counseling or groups, support staff, facility coordination, client referrals, cross-training when appropriate, site access, and other resources when needed (such as dinner for groups or phone/computer access for residents). The Safe Housing Project tailors specific program details to the needs of

individual housing sites, and is flexible in both services provided and time available. Beyond housing sites, the Safe Housing Project partners with other community based organizations (such as legal assistance or parenting assistance groups) to provide complete and comprehensive services and referrals.

6. Could/should your program be replicated in other areas of the country? Why?

The Safe Housing Project can be replicated in every city with low-income housing. Where support services are not an official amenity, the Safe Housing Project Coordinator can use any community based organization (such as an employment center, recreation center, or after school program) as a local foundation for community outreach. Being actively involved in these housing sites not only increases domestic violence awareness, resource knowledge, and referral, it also reaches some of the most underserved people in the country. Residents of the sites, our target population, are predominately formerly homeless, low to extremely low income, ethnically diverse, and often geographically isolated. While domestic violence is prevalent across all groups, it should be an ethical foundation of domestic violence service providers to outreach especially to these underserved populations.

Project implementation also encourages fair and ethical housing rights for victims of domestic violence. A property manager who has participated in a Domestic Violence 101 training understands why women stay in abusive relationships, and may decide to give the tenant another chance when they change their mind about housing the abusive partner. A housing site case manager, with training and consultation, may more quickly facilitate a resident's request to move her door's peephole to insure her security in answering her door. Site reception staff can be supported in developing relevant and safety-oriented protocols, for instance communicating resident restraining orders and restrained parties. Finally a client, having attended a Women's Dinner, has the resource and familiarity of the Project Coordinator and can call when they are falling victim to unlawful eviction or termination.

Regardless of the circumstance, the Safe Housing Project is a certain method of providing victims of domestic violence the tools to transform their own lives. It provides those that support and house them with the resources and knowledge to do so in an empowering and supportive way. It ends silence and stigma surrounding domestic violence and challenges those in positions of power to evaluate policies and procedures addressing those who have been victimized.



**A Refuge.
An Advocate.
A Strong Voice
Against Domestic
Violence.**

June 22, 2009

Ms. Marcia Roth
Executive Director
Mary Byron Project
10401 Linn Station Road
Louisville, KY 40223

Dear Ms. Roth,

On behalf of the Board, staff, women and children of La Casa de las Madres, I am pleased to submit the enclosed information and letters of support to encourage our Safe Housing Project's selection among the finalists for your Celebrating Solutions Award.

La Casa de las Madres
1663 Mission Street, Suite 225
San Francisco, CA 94103

Tel: 415.503.0500
Fax: 415.503.0301

Crisis Line: 877.503.1850
www.lacasadelasmadres.org

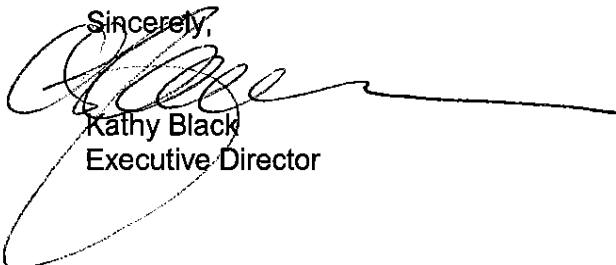
As San Francisco's oldest and largest anti-domestic violence service provider, La Casa is dedicated to creating safer, more hopeful lives for the women and children of our community. The Safe Housing Project is an important component of that work. An innovative, collaborative and multi-pronged undertaking, it aims to break the cycles of violence and homelessness and to prevent new incidents against tenants in family supportive housing by assisting site residents and staff in building a community, from within, that rejects violence while advocating for the implementation of policies and procedures and providing services that support domestic violence victims and hold abusers accountable.

Per your request, please find:

- Three letters of support—two from project partners and one from San Francisco's Mayor Gavin Newsom. My staff, Katharine Berg, spoke with you regarding the sources of La Casa's support letters and determined that because the Safe Housing Project's services are provided by a "victim serving organization" to bring resources to housing sites that do not have a victim/survivor expertise, two collaborative perspectives would qualify for the letters' purpose;
- Proof of 501(c)3 status;
- The current year's project budget is represented in the Community Program Budget enclosed. As intertwined arms of our community-based services, La Casa's Safe Housing Project, Safe Havens Project, Domestic Violence Response Team and Drop In Center operate with the enclosed budget;
- Our response to the general and specific questions you submitted below; and
- Project-specific evaluation tools.

We are proud to present our Safe Housing Project for your consideration and grateful for this opportunity to receive your award and its national recognition of successful practices. If you have any questions, please contact me or Katharine Berg, associate director at 415-503-0500 or katharine@lacasa.org.

Sincerely,



Kathy Black
Executive Director

Office of the Mayor
City & County of San Francisco



Gavin Newsom

June 12, 2009

Ms. Marcia Roth, Executive Director
The Mary Byron Project
10401 Linn Station Road
Louisville, KY 40223

RE: La Casa de las Madres -- Safe Housing Project

Dear Ms. Roth:

I was very pleased to learn that La Casa de las Madres and their Safe Housing Project was selected as a finalist for your Celebrating Solutions Award. The City and County of San Francisco has partnered with La Casa de las Madres for over 33 years to provide a safe haven for women and children fleeing domestic violence.

Their Safe Housing Project was a smart response to needs within the City's housing sites and represents a promising effort to empower domestic violence survivors and break cycles of violence and homelessness. Working collaboratively with subsidized housing providers, a key focus of their work is to build communities, from within, establish zero tolerance for violence and no longer accept the tyranny of intimidation and abuse, individually or systematically. By bringing La Casa's expertise onsite to the city's permanent family supportive housing communities, through staff training and consultation and individualized resident support, the project is able to build critical site capacity to respond safely and appropriately to domestic violence. As a result resident survivors are more readily able to sustain their housing stability and continue building healthy, productive lives.

San Francisco is already a leader in its investment in supportive housing as a solution to homelessness. With a vision of creating a community that fosters violence-free lives, our work is greatly enhanced through the ground breaking collaborative work between La Casa de las Madres and San Francisco's permanent supportive housing sites. We hope that the Safe Housing Project and the City's support illustrate why they should be recognized for their work developing innovative and responsive solutions to an unfortunately persistent problem.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of La Casa's proposal. Please feel free to contact Catherine Dodd, PhD, RN, Deputy Chief of Staff, at 415-554-6502, if you would like to speak to my office regarding my genuine support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gavin Newsom", written over a horizontal line.

Gavin Newsom
Mayor

sk



www.missionhousing.org

474 Valencia Street, Suite 280
San Francisco, CA 94103

415.864.6432
415.864.0378 fax
info@missionhousing.org

June 15, 2009

Ms. Marcia Roth, Executive Director
The Mary Byron Project
10401 Linn Station Road
Louisville, KY 40223

RE: La Casa de las Madres – Safe Housing Project

Dear Ms. Roth;

The Safe Housing Project at La Casa de las Madres is actively involved with our organization in preventing and responding to domestic violence. Mission Housing Development Corporation (MHDC) manages the services program for fourteen affordable housing developments in San Francisco, all of which are able to access the Safe Housing Project for staff assistance, crisis intervention, case consultation, and on-site resident activities such as Women's Groups and Empowerment Workshops. Many residents at these housing sites have previously experienced domestic violence and/or are currently in unhealthy relationships. Having services available on-site can mean the difference between safety and danger for a resident, his or her children and our staff.

Our staff have benefited greatly from extensive and continued training on issues surrounding domestic violence, offered by La Casa de las Madres. Trainings conducted by the Safe Housing Project for our staff focus on handling domestic violence within a community setting, the unique danger and response to domestic violence in low-income housing, and what types of domestic violence housing laws apply to residents living in residences managed by MHDC. Staff reports that the Safe Housing Project is easily accessible for consultation and crisis intervention, and that residents are able to access the project and receive continued services through La Casa de las Madres's other programs, such as shelter or counseling.

The Safe Housing Project is a model for community based services, as it delivers knowledge and resources directly where they are needed, the housing sites. As an added benefit these services are offered at no cost. For many residents, simply handing them a phone number for an agency is not enough. They are so entrenched in the chaos and control of abuse that they are unable to reach out for assistance. Offering services directly in a housing site enables more people to have the opportunity to start their own path to safety. We support La Casa de las Madres and the Safe Housing Project in applying for

the Celebrating Solutions Award, as they have truly found an innovative solution to reaching an otherwise isolated population.

I invite you to contact me if you have any questions regarding this letter of support at (415) 864-6432 ext. 317

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cheryl Canevari', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Cheryl Canevari
Director of Resident Services
Mission Housing Development Corporation

ECS

Episcopal Community Services

June 15, 2009

Ms. Marcia Roth, Executive Director
The Mary Byron Project
10401 Linn Station Road
Louisville, KY 40223

RE: La Casa de las Madres – Safe Housing Project

Dear Ms. Roth;

Episcopal Community Services of San Francisco provides permanent supportive housing to over 800 formerly homeless men, women, and children in San Francisco, offering a variety of on-site services designed to increase housing stability and foster personal growth and development.

Domestic violence is one of our most challenging issues, affecting the wellbeing of many of our residents and decreasing the likelihood of successful long-term housing. La Casa de las Madres and its Safe Housing Project have been instrumental in helping us to respond efficiently and effectively to occurrences of domestic violence and related problems at many of our housing sites.

The Safe Housing Project is active in various ways throughout our program spectrum. At our housing site for 47 formerly homeless families, the Safe Housing Project conducts a weekly Women's Group for residents, focused on healthy relationships, self-esteem, self-care, and other relationship-related issues. We value that our residents are able to share confidential information in a safe space with a domestic violence specialist. This group has been of high value to our residents and staff for over 3 years, and continues to help foster a violence free community. Staff at our seven (7) other housing sites for single adults receive extensive domestic violence training and often contact the Safe Housing Project during crisis for both staff and resident support and consultation. All of these services are provided to us free of charge.

It is extremely valuable to our organization to have on-site support from La Casa's Safe Housing Project. We are better prepared to assist residents who are experiencing domestic violence. We are able to more safely and accurately navigate the waters of preserving a safe community and supporting the choices of victims of domestic violence living within our buildings. The Safe Housing Project is deserving of the Mary Byron Project's Celebrating Solutions Award for recognition of their innovative, progressive, and valuable efforts in creating safer low-income housing communities.

Any questions regarding this letter or our partnership with La Casa de las Madres and the Safe Housing Project may be directed to me at (415) 487-3741.

Warmest Regards,



Kevin Sharps

Housing Director

ECS ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

165 EIGHTH STREET., 3RD FLOOR, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94103

(415) 487-3300 • FAX: 252-1743 • WWW.ECS-SF.ORG

Internal Revenue Service

Date: July 26, 2007

LA CASA DE LAS MADRES
1663 MISSION STREET
SUITE 225
SAN FRANCISCO CA 94103

Department of the Treasury
P. O. Box 2508
Cincinnati, OH 45201

Person to Contact:
Ms. Sellers 17-53503
Customer Service Representative
Toll Free Telephone Number:
877-829-5500
Federal Identification Number:
94-2330864

Dear Sir or Madam:

This is in response to your request of July 26, 2007, regarding your organization's tax-exempt status. We have updated our records to reflect the address change as indicated above.

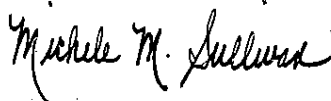
In August 1976 we issued a determination letter that recognized your organization as exempt from federal income tax. Our records indicate that your organization is currently exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Our records indicate that your organization is also classified as a public charity under sections 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(1)(A)(vi) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Our records indicate that contributions to your organization are deductible under section 170 of the Code, and that you are qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under section 2055, 2106 or 2522 of the Internal Revenue Code.

If you have any questions, please call us at the telephone number shown in the heading of this letter.

Sincerely,



Michele M. Sullivan, Oper. Mgr.
Accounts Management Operations 1

**La Casa de las Madres
Community Programs Annual Budget
July 1, 2008 - June 30, 2009**

SALARY AND BENEFITS

Salaries - Regular	302,377
Salaries - Relief	-
Payroll taxes	23,132
Unemployment insur.	3,024
Health/dental/life insur.	39,220
Long term disability insur.	1,993
Workers Comp insur.	8,827
Subtotal salaries and benefits	<u>378,573</u>

OPERATING EXPENSES

Accounting & audit	10,250
Advertising/recruitment	348
Bank charges	-
Board Development	348
Books & publications	2,171
Contract services	19,039
Direct client assistance	540
Dues & memberships	383
Food	-
Insurance	6,204
Interest	-
Licenses & fees	212
Office supplies	3,506
Payroll processing	751
Postage & delivery	902
Printing	565
Program supplies	1,520
Rent	20,778
Rentals - equipment	840
Repair & maintenance	702
Telephone	5,154
Training-staff development	232
Travel	580
Utilities	-
Total operating expenses	<u>75,025</u>

Depreciation	<u>-</u>
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<u>TOTAL EXPENSES</u>	<u><u>453,598</u></u>
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Organizational Reach and Service

La Casa de las Madres offers a continuum of expert intervention and prevention services, all free, confidential and multilingual, to address the immediate and ongoing needs of survivors of domestic violence and at-risk populations. Last fiscal year, 2007-2008, we provided 1,829 women, teens and children with individualized support services, responded to 4,279 24-hour domestic violence hotline calls, and educated 13,174 teens and adults about domestic violence, reaching more than 63,000 community members through awareness raising activities. Our program services span two 24 hour crisis phone lines (Adult and Teen), the Domestic Violence Response Team, a Drop In Counseling Center, Safe Havens and Safe Housing Projects, Teen Program, Emergency Shelter, Mary Elizabeth Inn Case Management Program, and Community Education and Outreach Program.

The Safe Housing Project, specifically, served 1,952 individuals through outreach, consultation and training and provided individualized services to 41 domestic violence victims and their families and engaged housing providers at 121 Bay Area sites.

Recent Accolades and Recognition

The access and services we provide to women, teens, and children 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year are vital. In April 2009, La Casa was identified as one of 23 Bay Area "Safety Net Providers" by the Community-Based Organization Task Force. This Task Force, convened by San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom and co-chaired by Dr. Sandra Hernandez, chief executive officer of the San Francisco Foundation, and City Attorney Dennis Herrera, recognized La Casa as one of the City's most strategic partners during the challenging budgetary times ahead.

La Casa's Safe Housing Project was selected in early 2009 for a poster presentation at the 5th Biennial National Conference on Health and Domestic Violence. Hosted by the Family Violence Prevention Fund, the event aims to advance the health care system's response to domestic violence and facilitate best-practice models. The conference attracts the nation's leading medical, public health and family violence experts from across the U.S. and highlights the latest research and most innovative responses to domestic violence.

The Safe Housing Project was also recognized recently by two of our partners, receiving a Certificate of Appreciation from Alice Griffith Communities of Opportunity Center in June 2009 and a Certificate of Appreciation from Bayview Learning Center and Apartments in July 2008.

In March 2007, La Casa was recognized by the California State Assembly for "emerg[ing] as a leader in San Francisco's anti-violence movement;" received the Great Seal of the Great State of California from the Secretary of State for our "important work of dedicated service;" was recognized by the San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women for outstanding service; and La Casa de las Madres Day was proclaimed by the San Francisco Mayor's Office to honor our work as "a pioneer in the field serving all victims who seek help."

La Casa's Teen Program has also been recognized six times by the Mayor's Office and the City and County of San Francisco through proclamations (on behalf of La Casa), of October as Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month, 2003-2008!

In 2004, La Casa's Emergency Shelter's programmatic capacity and leadership was acknowledged when La Casa was selected as one of 10 national participants in a pilot Outcomes Management Project initiated by Altria, Inc.'s Doors of Hope Program and the National Network to End Domestic Violence. The project utilized their "best and brightest"

grantees to explore the activities, language and goals used in communicating our programs to funders to arrive at realistic, program-driven frameworks for explaining definitions of success.

In recognition of La Casa's agency-wide administrative and programmatic strength, in October of 2003, La Casa was selected and participated as a "pilot program" for the State of California to test its new protocols for site inspections of domestic violence shelter programs under SB 185, a bill passed that year.

Finally, the component of our Emergency Shelter's family-based services, dubbed *Moms, Kids, Pets and Paints*, designed to promote the healing of our shelter clients' children, has been recognized twice on a state level for its therapeutic leadership. It was featured at the 2001 California Department of Health Services, Maternal & Child Health Branch's Annual Conference, and selected for presentation at the 2003 California Governor's Conference, Status of Violence Against Women: A Vision to End Violence.

Safe Housing Project Vision

If funding were not an issue, La Casa would implement an expansion of our Safe Housing Project target and activities. Currently, its capacity enhancing support is primarily aimed at permanent family supportive housing sites. Yet domestic violence crosses all lines of affiliation, identity, income, and family constellation, and certainly effects other types of permanent housing sites.

The Safe Housing Project does not ignore these additional housing sites but its activities, by virtue of capacity limitations, are targeted toward "family" sites. The project's most significant resource investment is in developing and maintaining trusting, open partnerships with housing site leadership and staff. In a funding rich environment, we would seek to add additional staff members to create these relationships and install communication conduits and resources within an expanded array of the City's subsidized housing sites.

The project is designed to undertake continued capacity expansion utilizing the fewest possible resources. It would require minimal additional infrastructure to promote one standard of care for victims of domestic violence amongst *all* supportive housing sites. Over the past five years, with the same initial investment of resources, the Safe Housing Project, has been able to expand and deepen its reach from 15 to 65 housing sites. Also, an additional 56 Bay Area housing providers have received basic domestic violence training and/or housing law clarification from the project regarding domestic violence victims and low income housing..

Safety Issues at Housing Sites

Regarding client safety, La Casa has created a web of strategies to encourage and support the emotional and physical safety of participants in housing site services. First, our outreach materials discuss a "women's group" focused on various women's issues as opposed to a "domestic violence group." Second, safety is discussed at the beginning of groups and counseling sessions. Staff and facilitators explore: is this a safe place for you to be; where is the person who is hurting you; what might happen if they found you here? If safety of service engagement onsite is questionable, a resident is encouraged to access services at La Casa's Drop In Counseling Center or we may determine a separate safe space or meeting time where a client can initially explore her situation and options. Third, onsite group participants agree that if anyone walks into the room during group, the subject will be immediately changed to health and nutrition. Finally, confidentiality is an oft discussed topic. Service participants are aware of La Casa's capacity and practice of holding confidential communications, that within the limits of law what they discuss will not be shared with housing site staff or anyone else without their

permission. Additionally, the importance of confidentiality of information shared within group settings is continually reinforced.

Regarding staff safety, several mechanisms are in place to encourage and insure staff safety in the community. When traveling offsite, project staff's destination, site contact information, and approximate time of return is communicated within La Casa. La Casa staff also check in and out with onsite housing staff when they arrive and depart from a particular site, and housing site staff are asked to communicate if anything strange or abnormal is happening. Regarding housing site staff safety, the project trains housing staff on how to approach the issue of domestic violence and talk with victims so that both parties are safe. The project also works with site staff to develop site safety plans and incident response procedures. Finally, La Casa has a close working relationship with the police department and encourages housing sites to do the same with their local stationhouses, so the process and response in an emergency will be as efficient as possible.

Direct Services

To support individual victims and encourage moves toward safety, the Safe Housing Project makes essential domestic violence services available onsite and provides access to La Casa's full range of domestic violence support services through priority referrals to our Drop In Counseling Center. For onsite services, depending upon individual housing site needs the project may schedule a regular staff check-in visit, resident group services or other site specific service constellations. Primarily, the project's direct services consist of crisis interventions like crisis counseling, safety planning and/or safehouse access; housing retention assistance, which may consist of assistance with applications, advocacy with property management or needed support services, and referrals to financial assistance programs; support groups that may run weekly, monthly, quarterly depending on the site; and quick connection, through priority referral, to La Casa's broader community service continuum.

La Casa's services are not focused upon meeting the needs of domestic violence perpetrators, however we do provide referrals for perpetrators, educate site staff on available resources for batterers, and team up with onsite staff to provide services to both partners separately. Often, La Casa provides the victim services and onsite staff provide services for the batterer. La Casa recognizes that batterers are also in great need of assistance and encourages housing site partners to provide support services as needed.

Evaluation

The Safe Housing Project evaluates all staff trainings, as well as resident events when appropriate. The staff training tool utilizes a mix of qualitative and quantitative information to gauge domestic violence knowledge pre- and post- training in addition to soliciting general feedback. The resident/direct service tool is similar and both are attached.

All evaluations are entered into La Casa's database, to track and collate results and provide guidance for continuing program improvement efforts.

Case Management

In our Safe Housing Project, La Casa does not act as a case manager for clients or residents. The housing sites we partner with offer case management services to some degree—a degree that differs for each site. La Casa's role is instead one that specifically identifies needs and issues that arise as a result of current or past domestic violence, and supports residents in addressing these practical and emotional issues.

As in all our programs, goals and objectives for interactions and the development of a Care Plan are client driven. In the Safe Housing Project that plan is typically short term, developed during crisis intervention or management and addressing a few concrete issues, i.e. the need for a restraining order, safety plan development, or relocation. Within the project, care plans are less formalized and often determined jointly in a group setting through support groups and women's events. Care plans, action plans and safety plans may be completed with clients in writing or verbally, and La Casa uses several adapted models based upon a client's particular needs, concerns and situation.

If a deeper level or individualized service is needed or if a need for ongoing support is identified, project staff connects the victim with the Drop In Center, where a full assessment of needs takes place. The assessment and resulting care plan may include peer or clinical counseling, support groups, court and social service accompaniment, advocacy regarding legal, housing, children's, financial and medical needs, and referrals for education, job training and placement, or clinical services. Again in the context of the Safe Housing Project, housing sites typically offer case management services and La Casa brings an issue-specific expertise to identify and encourage the safety and stability of resident victims and survivors of domestic violence.



Safe Housing Project Client Evaluation

Date:

Event Title:

Please circle the appropriate response:

▶ Level of understanding of domestic violence prior to the group:

1	2	3	4	5
None	Minimal	Some	Above average	Comprehensive

▶ Level of understanding of domestic violence after the group:

1	2	3	4	5
None	Minimal	Some	Above average	Comprehensive

▶ Materials provided during the group were:

1	2	3	4	5
Useless	Minimally Useful	Average	Quite Useful	Extremely Useful

Please answer the following questions:

1- What would you change about the group? Be Specific.

2- Please evaluate the presenter (knowledge, instruction ability, etc).

3- Would you feel comfortable contacting the presenter for assistance? Why or Why not?

4- What part of the presentation was most interesting or useful? Be specific.

5- Additional comments or suggestions.

Thank you! ** Optional:** Leave your name and safe contact information if you would like to be contacted by the presenter confidentially for further questions, information, and support.

Name: _____

Phone #: _____



Safe Housing Project Staff Training Evaluation

Date:

Organization Name:

Please circle the appropriate response:

▶ Level of understanding of domestic violence prior to the training:

1	2	3	4	5
None	Minimal	Some	Above average	Comprehensive

▶ Level of understanding of domestic violence after the training:

1	2	3	4	5
None	Minimal	Some	Above average	Comprehensive

▶ Materials provided during the training are:

1	2	3	4	5
Useless	Minimally Useful	Average	Quite Useful	Extremely Useful

Please answer the following questions:

1- What would you change about the presentation? Be Specific.

2- Please evaluate the presenter (knowledge, instruction ability, etc).

3- Would you feel comfortable contacting the presenter for assistance? Why or Why not?

4- What part of the presentation was most interesting or useful? Be specific.

5- Additional comments or suggestions.

Thank you! ** Optional:** Leave your name and safe contact information if you would like to be contacted confidentially by a La Casa Advocate.

Name: _____
Organization: _____

Email: _____
Phone: _____